

IAC-D-94/1
10 July 1956

SURVEY OF NIE DISSEMINATION AND USE

Prepared by the
Board of National Estimates
Central Intelligence Agency

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PREFACE

This Survey of NIE Dissemination^{1/} and Use was initially suggested by the Board of National Estimates, which believed that in the light of four years' experience with the production of National Intelligence Estimates, it was worthwhile to conduct an informal survey of the use which various consumers outside the intelligence community itself made of NIE's. The Director of Central Intelligence proposed that the Board undertake such a survey and report its findings to the IAC (IAC-D-94). The IAC concurred in this procedure on 1 March 1955 (IAC-M-186, 1 March 1955).

The survey was conducted by the Board of National Estimates in cooperation with the IAC agencies, in two stages. The first stage was a written questionnaire to all offices and agencies receiving NIE's which was designed to reveal the extent to which these estimates received further dissemination within each agency. The results are summarized in Part I (see Tab A for a list of those participating).

^{1/} Dissemination is used herein to mean the delivery of the printed NIE, i. e., direct dissemination.

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The second stage was a series of interviews with a representative sample of final consumers^{2/} to ascertain what use they actually made of NIE's. Members and representatives of the Board of National Estimates interviewed more than 75 representative end-users in all receiving departments, offices, and agencies except the Department of the Navy, and the Department of Defense (see Tab B for those interviewed). ONI and the Joint Intelligence Group preferred that sample inquiries or interviews addressed to those consumers to whom they disseminated NIE's be conducted by them (see Tab C for a list of offices contacted). Because of differing methods and this division of responsibility for the second stage, the results did not prove wholly comparable. In addition to the interviews in Washington, letter inquiries were sent by the appropriate IAC agencies to representative consumers outside of Washington (see Tab D for list of those contacted by letter). The results of the second stage of the survey are summarized in Parts II and III.

^{2/} "Final Consumer" and "end-users" are used to mean a senior or responsible officer at the receiving agency who might use national intelligence in the discharge of his duties. The survey did not cover the extensive use of NIE's within the intelligence community.

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The following limitations on the survey should be borne in mind:

- a. It was not designed to obtain opinions regarding the adequacy of NIE content or judgments on possible changes to make NIE's more useful.
- b. The number of valid over-all generalizations that can be made is limited by the variations in the survey coverage of the agencies and departments, the different types of NIE's, and the uses to which they are put.

The primary goal of the survey was the limited one of establishing the distribution pattern of NIE's and of shedding light on the kinds of uses to which they are put.

The cut-off date for information on which this report is based was 20 April 1956.

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CONCLUSIONS

1. An average of 249 NIE's^{3/} are distributed on a regular basis to the White House, the National Security Council, the Operations Coordinating Board, and the major departments and agencies with national security responsibilities. Many of these are further distributed to major commands and missions outside Washington, both overseas and in the US. Selected NIE's go to the US Information Agency, the Federal Civil Defense Agency, the Department of Commerce, and



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2. In most of these agencies, nearly all NIE's are distributed to offices with over-all responsibilities in the national security field, and selected NIE's are disseminated to lower echelons with narrower responsibilities on a need-to-know basis. NIE's also receive substantial indirect dissemination in most agencies through being incorporated, attributed or unattributed, in staff briefings memoranda, or in materials assembled for work on specific problems.

^{3/} Number of Top Secret NIE's distributed is less; see footnote 4 on page 10.

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3. Most top-level executives (the President and Department or Agency heads) see only the relatively few NIE's which are selected for them by their intelligence and screening officers, and then they usually read only the conclusions, briefs, or selected portions. The exceptions are most likely to be those NIE's dealing with crisis situations requiring urgent and high-level policy decisions.

4. However, NIE's are extensively read by second and third echelon officials in the White House staff and in the NSC and OCB staffs, which require coordinated national intelligence in dealing with national security problems which transcend the interests of a single agency or department.

5. NIE's are also used in major departments and agencies by various staffs responsible for national security planning and execution. The extent of use tends to vary according to the applicability and timeliness of a given NIE to the problem at hand, the user's access to alternative or complementary sources of intelligence, and the degree to which the users are concerned with problems transcending the interests of their respective departments or agencies.

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6. However, aside from possible indirect dissemination, it appears that some NIE's do not reach all of the departmental policy or planning levels or other key officials who might find them useful. Some of those interviewed indicated that they had not seen particular NIE's which appeared pertinent to their responsibilities. In some instances, this appeared to result from the failure of those in their immediate offices to pass the NIE's on to their chiefs; in others, the criteria for distribution appeared to be overly restrictive.

7. Although a number of NIE's are used in working on specific planning and policy problems, they are more generally used for background purposes. In addition, the distribution of the collective judgments of the intelligence community at nearly all levels of the government performs a function that is important, though quantitatively difficult to measure, in facilitating both the formulation and execution of national security policy.

8. The majority of NIE users interviewed indicated that the format and problem coverage of NIE's are generally adequate for their purposes, though many expressed dissatisfaction with certain aspects

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of some NIE's. The survey obtained such expressions of opinion only as a by-product, and there is not sufficient evidence to serve as a basis for recommending changes.

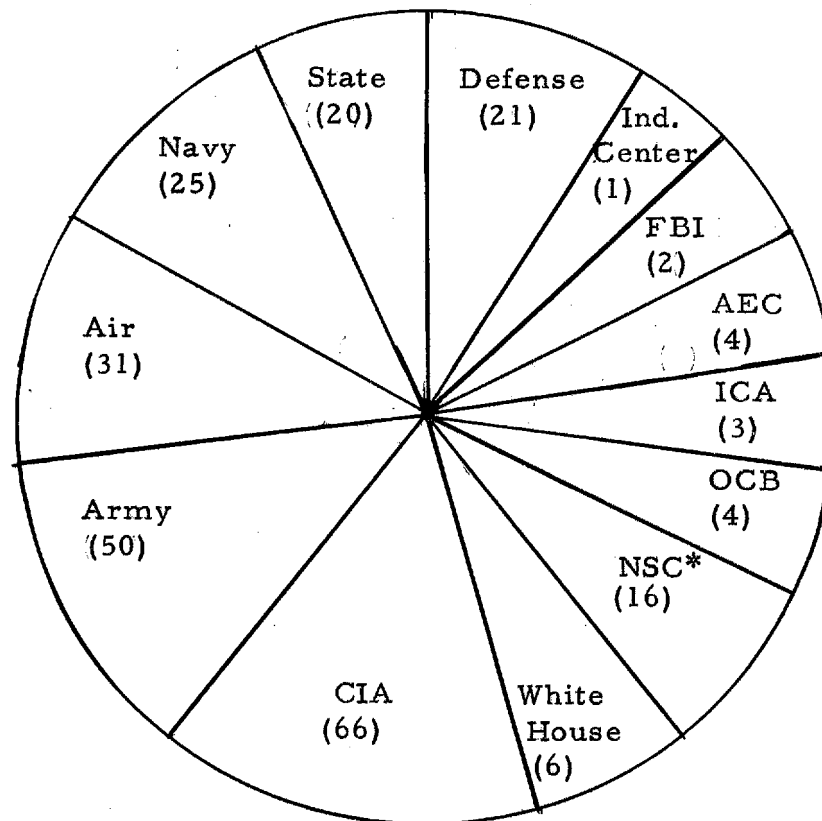
9. Some of the limitations on NIE use mentioned in the survey include:

- a. Some NIE's are too long to permit their being read in full by top-level executives, and even by some interested executives in the support echelons.
- b. On the other hand, the generality of some NIE's limits their usefulness, especially to lower echelons responsible for detailed foreign policy planning and execution.
- c. Some NIE's are not relevant or timely enough for use in working on specific policy problems.
- d. Some officials feel that if NIE's placed more emphasis on the consequence of US courses of action they would be of more use in weighing the advantages or disadvantages of various alternative courses open to the US.

PART I

DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

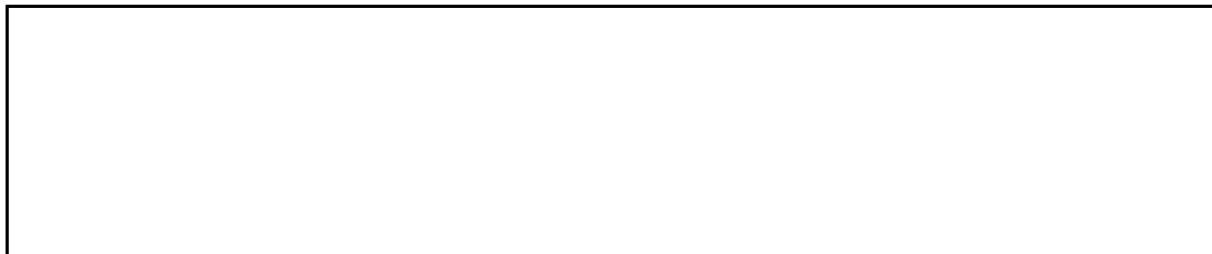
1. Initial Dissemination. CIA undertakes the printing and initial dissemination of National Intelligence Estimates (NIE's) once they have been approved by the IAC. Normally, 316 copies of each Secret NIE^{4/} are printed. Of this total, some 67 are retained within CIA for central reference, vital document storage, and reserve. The remaining 249^{5/} copies are initially disseminated as follows:^{6/}



TOTAL - 249

*Includes the members of the NSC, the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and the NSC Secretariat and Staff.

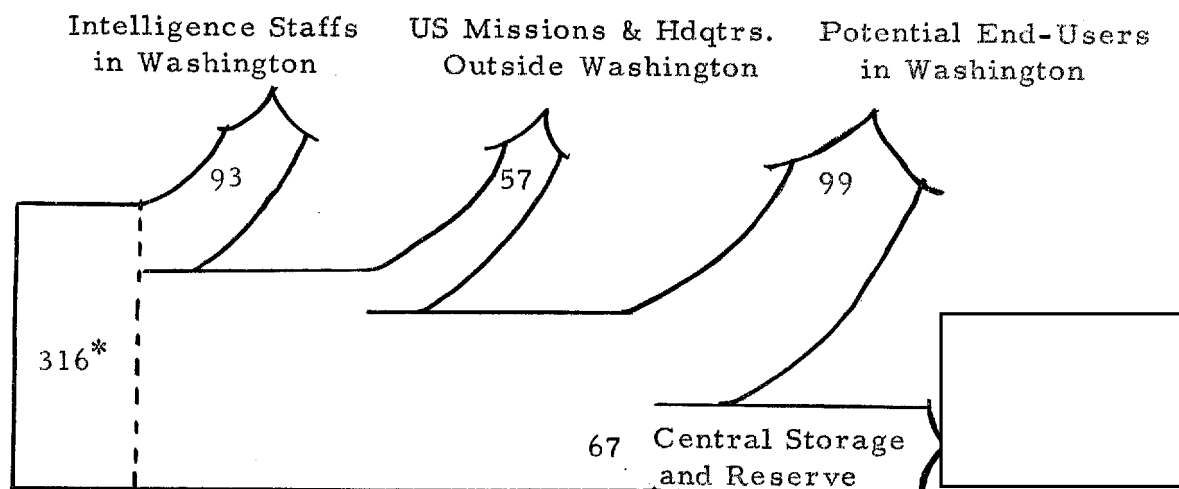
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2. Onward Dissemination. The copies of each NIE are delivered en bloc to the receiving agencies, which are responsible for onward dissemination to selected officials or officers in Washington, elsewhere in the US and outside the country. In all the receiving agencies which have an intelligence staff, that component receives the NIE's initially, retains a certain number for its own use, and forwards

Flow of NIE's



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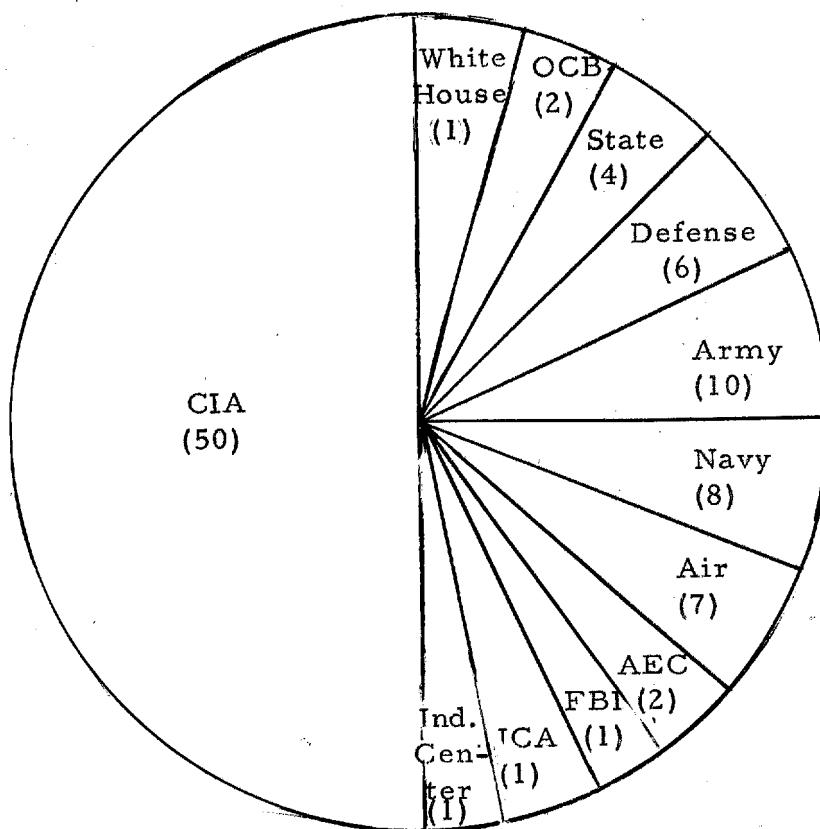
* All breakdowns are based on total number of copies of Secret NIE's normally printed. All figures are approximate.

the remainder to selected recipients according to the problem, area, or subject addressed. The intelligence component is also responsible for enforcing any special restrictions on NIE onward dissemination. No standard distribution list for NIE's is used by any of the receiving agencies, but certain officers are always on the list for all NIE's. In the receiving agencies without a full-time intelligence staff, NIE's usually go to a designated officer who performs the onward dissemination and general control functions.

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- 4/ Only 296 copies of Top Secret NIE's are ordinarily printed. Even fewer copies of special request or special classification NIE's are printed. For consistency in text and statistical breakdowns, the base figure of 316 is used in this report.
- 5/ The total number of copies distributed varies because JIG and CIA receive extra copies of certain NIE's, and because FCDA receives copies of selected NIE's.
-

- 6/ The figures in this and the following charts are averages. The number of copies disseminated of any given NIE may vary considerably depending on its subject matter.

3. Retention in Intelligence Staffs. Of the 249 copies of each NIE normally delivered to the receiving agencies in Washington, about 93 copies are retained in the intelligence areas or staffs. The average number of copies retained is as follows:



TOTAL - 93

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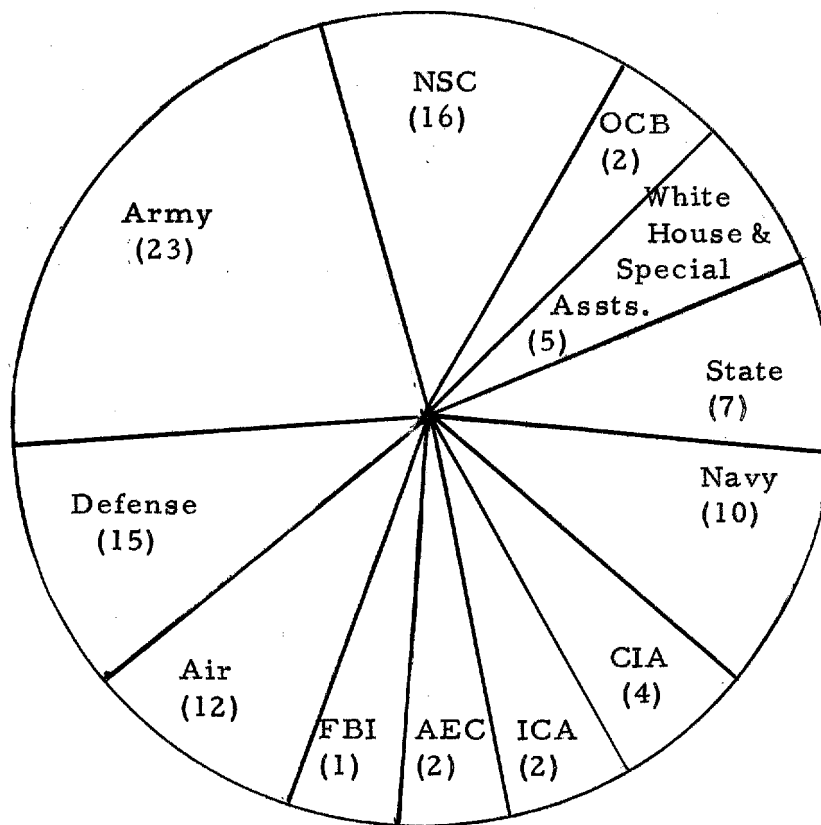
In addition to those copies retained by the intelligence staffs of the IAC agencies, a few copies are retained by the small intelligence staffs of various non-IAC recipients. For example, the copy sent to the President is normally retained by the Staff Secretary for Intelligence, two copies are kept in the Intelligence Staff of the Operations Coordinating Board, one in the International Cooperation Administration, and one in the National Indications Center.

4. NIE Delivery to Potential End-Users in Washington.

Ordinarily, 99 copies are forwarded to potential end-users in Washington. An examination of the distribution of these copies provides additional information of a general nature on who uses NIE's and what uses are actually made of them. An average of 74 of these copies are sent to potential end-users in the IAC agencies (see chart). Nearly all the 25 copies forwarded to potential end-users outside the IAC agencies go to officers in the area of the government primarily concerned with the final stages of policy formulation. Of these, 5 copies go to the White House and the President's Special Assistants, 18 go to the National Security Council and the Operations Coordinating Board, and 2 go to the International Cooperation Administration.

Thus, of the 99 copies forwarded to potential end-users in Washington, about three-fourths go via IAC members to officers in their respective departments who are concerned with either the formulation or the execution of US foreign policy. Nearly all the rest of the NIE's go to officers in the area of the government primarily concerned with the final stages of US foreign policy formulation and decision.

To Potential End-Users in Washington



TOTAL - 99

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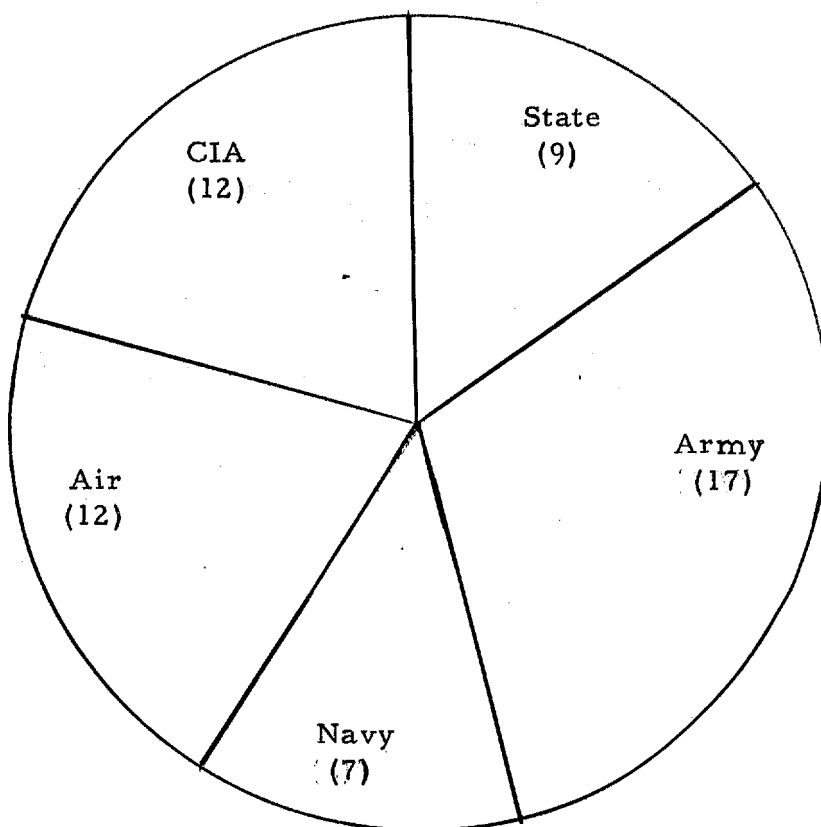
5. NIE Dissemination Outside Washington. Normally, 57 copies of NIE's are forwarded to US missions or headquarters outside Washington, most of them outside the country. About 45 copies are ordinarily sent to US officers who are stationed in overseas installations or who represent the US in international organizations; the remainder are sent to military commands in the US outside of Washington. These NIE's are forwarded by the responsible IAC agency according to the area and the problem covered. Of the total so delivered, the Department of State normally sends about 9 copies, the Department of the Army, about 17, the Department of the Navy, 7, the Department of the Air Force, 12. CIA normally forwards 2 copies to the US Supreme Commander at SHAPE, 3 copies to CIA operational representatives, and about 7 to other representatives.

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To US Missions and Headquarters Outside Washington



TOTAL - 57*

* See paras. 44-48. Ordinarily, NIE's sent overseas to one departmental representative are available to representatives of other services in the area.

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PART II

RECEIPT, READERSHIP, AND USE

A. The White House and the President's Special Assistants

7. Six copies of NIE's are received by the White House staff. Copies of each are routed to: (a) the Staff Secretary for Intelligence, (b) the Office of the Special Assistant for Psychological Affairs, and (c) the Office of the Special Assistant for Disarmament Matters. The Office of the Special Assistant for Foreign Economic Affairs receives only those NIE's relating to specific and assigned problems.^{9/}

8. The President himself sees only those NIE's which are selected for him by the Staff Secretary for Intelligence or those which he asks for after having been briefed on their contents. In the majority of cases the President relies on the briefings of NIE's, either oral or written, prepared by the Staff Secretary for Intelligence. The Director

^{9/} The Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Matters is considered a part of the NSC, inasmuch as the Special Assistant is Chairman of the NSC Planning Board.

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of Central Intelligence also occasionally briefs on NIE's at NSC meetings. The President regards NIE's as important to him in several respects. Primarily, NIE's are valuable because they represent the best possible resolution at the intelligence level of differences among most departments and agencies participating in initial formulation and execution of US foreign policy, i. e., completed staff work. The President also regards as useful those NIE's which deal with specific foreign policy problems on which he is currently working. Finally, the President makes use of the small number of NIE's which contain new information, a new approach, or some new ideas and interpretations.

9. The Special Assistants for Psychological Affairs,^{10/} for Disarmament Matters, and for Economic Affairs are not ordinarily first-hand recipients of NIE's. NIE's are first used in varying degrees by the ranking officer in each office. Thus, the impact that NIE's have on the Special Assistants depends almost entirely on the extent to which their subordinates use the NIE's in doing the necessary staff

^{10/} At the time this was office of Mr. Nelson Rockefeller.

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work for their principals and the President.

10. The ranking officers on the staffs of the White House Special Assistants read the conclusions of virtually all NIE's received. In this way, they learn the collective judgment of the intelligence community on the important problems of the day and are in a position to determine whether further use can be made of the NIE. The extent to which they go on to read the Discussion depends upon a variety of factors and generalizations are difficult. How thoroughly an NIE will be read and used often depends on such intangibles as the amount of time available when the NIE arrives, how much or little the receiving officer happens to know about the subject, and the receiving officer's estimate of his superior's interest and requirements. However, the most important factor determining how thoroughly an NIE is read by White House staff officers is its subject matter and its applicability, both in substance and timeliness, to the work of the reader.

11. Thus, the Office of the Special Assistant for Disarmament Matters and the President's Staff Secretary for Intelligence use NIE's more extensively than the Office of the Special Assistants for

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Psychological Affairs and Economic Affairs. Few NIE's directly treat the problems with which the latter offices are concerned, and most readers found them only of "some" 11/ use for background purposes. On the other hand, a wide range of NIE's (some of them specifically requested) are the only source of agreed intelligence judgment and information essential to the work of the Assistant for Disarmament Matters.

B. The National Security Council and Planning Board

12. This section deals with the receipt of NIE's and their use in the production of NSC papers, and will not describe the use made of NIE's by the individual members of the NSC. Sixteen copies are received by the National Security Council and the Office of the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Matters. The Special Assistant, the Secretary of the NSC, and the Deputy Secretary all receive copies of all NIE's. The majority of the NSC staff members also regularly receive copies of all NIE's. Selected NIE's are brought to the attention of the Council members.

11/ The use rating was "great, considerable, some, little, or none."

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13. All recipients in the NSC Secretariat regularly read the conclusions of all NIE's and in the majority of cases read the text as well. The NIE's which receive the closest attention are those which deal with a problem with which the Planning Board or the NSC is currently engaged.

14. Apart from the use made by members of the NSC and its Planning Board within their respective departments (covered below), it should be noted that the NSC and the Planning Board do use the NIE's directly. The Director of Central Intelligence frequently uses NIE's in his weekly oral briefing of the NSC. NIE's are used by the CIA representative at Planning Board meetings. NIE's are also the intelligence contributions to NSC policy papers, on occasion being incorporated in part verbatim in the NSC text.

15. The importance of NIE's to the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs and the NSC Secretariat derives primarily from their need for the collective judgments of the intelligence community. Just as their major preoccupation is with matters transcending the responsibility of one agency or department, so they

require fully coordinated national intelligence. Similarly, the close relationship between the intelligence estimate of the situation and the US policy with regard to that situation causes the NSC staff to study closely and rely heavily on NIE's. In summary, the majority of users of NIE's in the NSC staff and secretariat consider them of great value because they express the intelligence community's collective judgment, provide useful background information, and are used directly in working on NSC policy papers.

C. NSC Net Evaluation Subcommittee.

16. The NSC Net Evaluation Subcommittee relies almost exclusively on NIE's for its intelligence support. The nature of its work requires that the intelligence it uses be fully coordinated national intelligence. Several NIE's are prepared expressly for the NESC. For these reasons, the NIE's which deal with Soviet capabilities for attack on the US are carefully and thoroughly read and frequently referred to by all members of the NESC staff during the preparation of the annual NESC report.

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D. The Operations Coordinating Board

17. This section deals with the receipt and use of NIE's by the OCB secretariat and staff. NIE use by the OCB members themselves will be treated under the appropriate departmental or agency section. The OCB secretariat and staff receives four copies of all NIE's. The Executive Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Chief of the Intelligence Staff each receive a copy, and all officers working on special projects receive NIE's which deal with the problem they are working on. All recipients read the conclusions of all NIE's and in the great majority of cases the full text as well. The Executive Secretary reads the full text of those NIE's which bear on problems on which OCB is currently working. He often reads extensively in other NIE's as well as a means of clarifying his own thinking about the range of foreign policy problems for which OCB is or may become responsible.

18. NIE's contribute significantly to the effectiveness of the work of the OCB secretariat. They provide useful background information, make available the collective judgment of the intelligence

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community for use in preparing OCB progress reports, and to a lesser extent supply judgments and information not available elsewhere. However, NIE's are not as extensively used by the OCB as they are by the NSC Planning Board and secretariat. The principal reasons for this are: (a) the major portion of OCB's work and papers is organized on a country basis and therefore a number of the functional or generalized NIE's are of little direct use; (b) OCB progress reports are issued periodically and there is not always an up-to-date NIE available at the time when it could be used to greatest advantage; (c) frequently OCB reports require more detailed information than is contained in the average NIE; (d) OCB receives more intelligence from sources other than NIE's than does the NSC secretariat.

E. The Department of State

19. The Special Assistant for Intelligence (R) forwards an average of seven copies of each NIE to various users throughout the Department, the number varying with the subject matter. He normally forwards a summary of each NIE to the Secretary of State and Under Secretary with the full estimate attached. Copies of the Advance

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Conclusions are frequently forwarded when the NIE is especially timely. In this form the Secretary and Under Secretary see the gist of a high proportion of NIE's. Occasionally a particularly important NIE on an urgent problem will also be brought to their personal attention by another member of their staff, by the Assistant Secretary for an area, by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, or by the Director of Central Intelligence. The Secretary thus makes use of NIE's as another source of information in handling a particular problem of the moment. In some cases the Secretary and the Under Secretary also receive the substance of appropriate NIE's as part of their morning briefings.

20. The Director, Policy Planning Staff, receives all NIE's. Initially, he reads only selected NIE's and selectively in them. Subsequently, he reads conclusions and text of almost all NIE's and devotes particular attention to those which pertain to particular foreign policy problems he is engaged on. He considers NIE's as essential for personal background and for working on specific foreign policy problems.

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21. NIE's are routed to other areas in the Department largely on a geographic basis. The "R" Area sends to each Assistant Secretary those NIE's which concern his area. Valid generalizations concerning the extent to which NIE's are read are difficult because of such varying factors as: (a) other demands on the recipient's time when the NIE's are received; (b) the applicability of the NIE to the problems confronting the reader at the moment; and (c) the degree of the recipient's prior knowledge of the subject of the NIE. In comparison with users in the military agencies, the State Department readers in area offices tend to rely less on NIE's for personal information. This is so in part because State officials are already intimately familiar with the political, economic, and social analyses which form a large portion of NIE's and in part because they receive a larger daily flow of information about their area of concern. Nevertheless, NIE's are thought to be of "considerable"^{12/} value at all levels by most of the officers working on specific foreign policy problems, particularly in

^{12/} The rating range was "great, considerable, some, little, or none."

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the preparation of drafts for the NSC Planning Board, which are of the same level of generality as NIE's. NIE's also have considerable value as a reference to the collective judgment of the intelligence community.

F. The Department of Defense^{13/}

22. The Joint Intelligence Group forwards an average of three NIE's to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Little information was forthcoming on the end use of these NIE's.

23. The Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. An average of 12 NIE's are distributed to non-intelligence users in the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We have little information as to which individuals in the various offices of the Joint Chiefs read NIE's. The JIG questionnaire indicates, however, that (a) only the conclusions are usually read in the office of the Special Assistant to the Secretary of

¹³ The Survey at the Department of Defense and JCS level was conducted by the Joint Intelligence Group on the basis of written questionnaires. The returns give a far less thorough picture of NIE receipt, readership, and use than was obtained by interview for other departments and agencies.

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Defense for Special Operations, in the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, and in the office of the Chairman, JCS; (b) the entire estimate is "sometimes" read in the office for NSC Affairs and in the Joint Logistic Plans Group; and (c) the entire text is "usually" read in the office of NSC Affairs and in the Joint Strategic Plans Group.

24. Answers to the JIG questionnaire indicate that NIE's are read primarily for personal background and information, with only three of the seven offices responding indicating that NIE's were consistently used for working on specific problems. The answers give no clear indication of the reasons for this. For example, one office which replied that it consistently used NIE's for working on a specific problem also replied that the substance of NIE's was not adequate for its purposes. The most frequently mentioned limitation on NIE's was that they were too general.

25. In addition to their direct use by end recipients, many NIE's are extensively used by the Joint Intelligence Group in the preparation of the political and economic portions of JIC papers and of various JIG briefings and memoranda.

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26. Of the 50 copies of NIE's sent to the Department of the Army, an average of 23 are forwarded by AC of S, Intelligence (G-2), to offices and individuals in Washington directly responsible for those aspects of Army plans and operations which concern or are affected by developments abroad. The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff receive a copy of all NIE's; each NIE so forwarded has a one-page summary prepared by G-2 which includes the NIE's major conclusions.

27. One difficulty in assessing the impact of NIE's in the Department of the Army stems from the variety of ways in which their contents are brought to the attention of the top Department officials. For example, the substance of a newly published NIE is almost always included in the weekly briefing by G-2 which is attended by top officials of the Department. The major conclusions of all NIE's are also included in "black books" which are prepared for various officials either for their background information or for their use in dealing with a particular problem. Finally, in providing intelligence support for Department officials, including the weekly briefings mentioned above,

G-2 will often rely heavily on NIE's even though the end product does not specifically indicate such reliance.

28. The following Army officials receive and read with varying degrees of thoroughness the majority of NIE's: Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Research, Assistant Secretary of Civilian-Military Affairs, and Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans. In most cases, the NIE's are first screened by personal staff subordinates, who will check or side-line appropriate portions. The thoroughness with which an NIE is read by the principals appears to depend upon a number of factors which include: (a) their individual working habits and interests; (b) the timeliness and applicability of a given NIE to problems currently confronting them; (c) their need for joint community judgments; i. e., in preparing for NSC meetings or intelligence conferences or papers with other countries; and (d) the extent to which their attention is flagged by their screeners. Although the survey material is inadequate to permit firm generalizations, as a general rule NIE's have the greatest impact at this level in the Army when they deal with important matters affecting over-all Army plans and policy (the impact of nuclear parity), treat subjects affecting the Army

which are particularly controversial (the fall of Dien Bien Phu), or affect plans for the disposition of Army resources (Yugoslavia, Baghdad Pact, Korea).

29. NIE's are more extensively used in G-3 than in any other office of the Department of the Army. It is here that relevant NIE's are often used as an integral part of the process of preparing Army plans. Frequently, estimates in NIE's form the basis for the assumptions upon which Army plans are prepared. The level of generality in an NIE is adequate in most cases for the work done in G-3, and where it isn't supplementary detailed information is obtained from G-2. All G-3 desk officers receive all NIE's which pertain to the problems they are assigned.

30. In summary, the chief uses to which NIE's are put in the Department of the Army seem to be as a reference to the collective judgments of the intelligence community, as a convenient source of personal background information on a variety of subjects affecting Army policy and programs, and as a useful tool for working out specific Army or national foreign policy problems.

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H. The Department of the Air Force

31. AFOIN regularly forwards 12 NIE's to Air Force offices in Washington. These include the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff, and the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, as well as the major components charged with planning and operational responsibilities in the field.

32. The Secretary of the Air Force is shown only a limited number of NIE's. These are selected for him largely on the basis of providing him with the collective judgment of the intelligence community on joint military planning matters which have direct and important implications for the Air Force.

33. A small number of NIE's are brought to the attention of the Chief of Staff and the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, when in the opinion of AFOIN, they pertain to Air Force matters, allude to particularly interesting political developments, or contain interesting dissents. They read those portions of NIE's which are brought to their attention largely for personal background and so that they may be aware of collective judgments on matters of concern to them. The Director,

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AFOIN, perceives no evidence that any NIE has been of direct use to them in dealing with their responsibilities, making decisions, or establishing a position in dealing with other officials. However, NIE's have been useful in supplementing their information. The Director, AFOIN, believes that NIE's would be more useful to the Air Force leadership if they more clearly identified things that are causative in certain situations in such terms as to give action people the best chance to decide whether they should prepare against these things, destroy or reduce them, increase them, or take no action. NIE's are also used in connection with Joint Strategic Plans and in preparing special studies to be referred to the Chief of Staff.

I. The Department of the Navy

34. On an average, ONI forwards 10 copies of all NIE's to non-intelligence echelons, including the offices of the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Politico-Military Policy Division, and the Strategic Plans Division. In all these offices, NIE's are screened by qualified staff members before further distribution is made.

35. The Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations make direct use of only a limited number of NIE's. In general, they

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rely primarily for their intelligence on briefings by their departmental staffs. In most cases, these staffs use NIE's in preparing intelligence material for the SECNAV and CNO and attributed briefs of newly published NIE's are included in the twice-weekly ONI briefings. However, the SECNAV and CNO only occasionally are told what portions of their briefings stem directly from NIE's or other estimates, and then only when the briefing concerns a special problem on which they are working. Certain NIE's may be selected by their aides or forwarded by the various staff divisions as being of particular interest. When so forwarded, the entire estimate is usually read, with particular reference to the noted portions. The principal criteria for selecting NIE's for forwarding directly to the SECNAV and the CNO are relevance to current problems where the collective judgment of the community is important and which have a direct bearing on national decisions importantly affecting Navy interests, policies, and programs.

36. The Politico-Military Policy Division and the Strategic Plans Division are the major users of NIE's in the Department of the Navy. The Directors of the Divisions do not initially see all NIE's, although most eventually reach them, with appropriate sections

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side-lined or with staff comments. In general, the Division Directors read only the conclusions and the side-lined portions of the text of those NIE's which they receive.

37. The extent to which NIE's are initially used and read in the two divisions depends primarily on their relevance to the work immediately at hand. The conclusions are almost invariably read upon receipt by all users. The NIE's are subsequently used in varying degrees in connection with reviewing plans, preparing memoranda on current developments, and drafting intelligence annexes of area studies. Although NIE's appear to have considerable value in providing information for personal background, their more important use is in bringing the collective judgment of the intelligence community to bear on working out the Navy's position on specific foreign policy questions. These uses include: (a) providing a basis for joint action; (b) providing a check against individual judgments; (c) furnishing an over-all point of view; and (d) permitting a more rounded evaluation of proposed national policy. In general, NIE's serve a useful purpose in support of work on over-all, long-range problems or on questions of national policy, but are much less useful in their application to

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specific or detailed naval problems.

J. The Federal Bureau of Investigation

38. Two copies of all NIE's produced are received in the office of the representative of the FBI on the IAC. He prepares a summary to attach to the copy forwarded to the Director. The other copy is normally routed to the espionage unit and to the office of domestic intelligence. The Director of the FBI is forwarded NIE's primarily for briefing and background purposes. The other principal use of NIE's to the FBI is to facilitate the coordination of domestic and foreign intelligence activities.

K. The Atomic Energy Commission

39. The Atomic Energy Commission receives four copies of all NIE's. The Chief of the Intelligence Division screens all NIE's received and determines their further distribution within the Commission. NIE's fall into three general categories as far as AEC use is concerned. Those NIE's or portions thereof dealing with AEC matters are of limited use largely because the AEC itself is a major participant in their preparation. Those which deal with countries with which the US

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has atomic energy agreements or upon whom the US relies for atomic energy resources are of considerable value to the AEC in formulating its programs and policies in the foreign field. Finally, those NIE's of a more general character are used primarily in the AEC for general background information of responsible officials who have some concern with foreign policy problems.

L. The International Cooperation Administration

40. ICA receives three copies of all NIE's. They are screened by the Special Assistant to the Director for OCB and NSC matters and selected by him for further appropriate dissemination. Normally, NIE's are forwarded to the Director's office (usually side-lined or briefed), to the Director of Plans, the appropriate area chief, and to others involved in NSC or OCB support.

41. In addition to providing personal background information, NIE's are used principally as (a) starting points by country desk officers for NSC status reports and various reports to the OCB; (b) as bases for evaluating the mutual security programs in various countries; and (c) as summary briefings for ranking officials preparing

to visit foreign countries. ICA respondent indicated that NIE's generally do not treat economic matters in sufficient detail to be of much use in working out detailed economic programs for individual countries.

M. The United States Information Agency

42. USIA receives four copies of those estimates approved for release by the IAC (in practice almost all NIE's). On arrival, NIE's receive almost automatic distribution to those responsible for the subject matter treated, with copies of all NIE's going to the Director's office and to the Chief of the Intelligence Division. NIE's are of only minor direct use in the work of USIA. They are read primarily for personal background and information purposes. Some recipients find the collective community judgments contained therein as useful checks on their own thinking. Occasionally, the long-range forecasts in NIE's are used as a basis for determining the priority of USIA effort assigned to particular countries, areas, or problems.

N. The Central Intelligence Agency

43. Four copies are distributed to the Office of the Director, one to each of the following: The Director, who is the intelligence

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adviser to the NSC; The Deputy Director; The Deputy Director (Intelligence), who is the intelligence adviser to the NSC Planning Board; and to the NSC Planning Board Assistant. These officials participate actively in the work of the NSC, which makes use of NIE's in deliberations and in drafting policy papers (see paragraphs 12-15 for NSC use). In addition, eight copies of NIE's are distributed for use in the DD/P area of CIA headquarters in Washington, where they are used in varying degrees by planning and area offices. Recipients rate NIE's as valuable for personal background and information, particularly because they contain the collective judgment of the intelligence community. NIE's are also useful in alerting planners to the possible need for preemptive operations in areas that may become critical. Finally, NIE's are variously used as a basis for over-all planning, developing regional plans, making various types of progress reports, and preparing requirements for intelligence collection.

O. Distribution and Use Outside of Washington

44. The information on the use of NIE's outside of Washington was obtained by the use of written questionnaires (except for SAC which responded to the AFOIN questionnaire, and also was interviewed).

The information so obtained is not as complete, both in substance and in the proportion of replies to number of recipients, as was possible in the case of Washington users.

45. Department of State. The Special Assistant, Intelligence, distributes an average of nine NIE's to State Department posts overseas, using as principal criterion the relevancy of a given NIE to the duties of the post. NIE's are read with interest and thoroughness by the top-level officers (including military attachés) in all the overseas missions. However, most missions report that the principal value of NIE's is for background information, as a useful briefing document for incoming personnel or official visitors, and especially as a guide to thinking in Washington.

46. Department of the Army. The Army normally distributes about 17 copies of NIE's to Army Commanders in the ZI, major overseas commands, appropriate Army schools and military attachés, and commands for which the Army is executive agent. The number of NIE's sent overseas varies with the subject matter of the NIE. The following views on the use of NIE's are based on replies to a G-2 questionnaire by USEUCOM and the Far East Command, and the Caribbean Command.

NIE's are available to a limited number of high-level officials outside the intelligence divisions. The principal use of NIE's in these commands is as important sources of background material--often unavailable elsewhere--for use by the intelligence divisions in performing their normal intelligence briefing and operational support functions.

47. Department of the Air Force. The Air Force ordinarily sends an average of 12 copies of NIE's to four overseas commands and to eight command headquarters in the US outside of Washington. The following is based upon responses to an AFOIN questionnaire by ADC, the Alaskan Air Command, the Northeast Air Command, and upon an interview with SAC. In both the interior and overseas commands, NIE's are used extensively in the preparation of command estimates of the enemy situation and often contain information not available elsewhere. The Strategic Air Command found NIE's particularly valuable as being the principal source of the top-level intelligence thinking and collective intelligence judgments evolving in Washington. SAC also makes considerable use of NIE's as a source of personal background information and for organizational planning.

48. Department of the Navy. The Navy disseminates an average of seven NIE's to overseas commands. NIE's are extensively used by the intelligence divisions of these commands as a basis for providing over-all guidance to the policy and planning echelons either directly or as part of locally prepared intelligence estimates. Several of the commands indicated that NIE's constitute their most important, if not their only, source of fully coordinated national intelligence and guide to top-level intelligence thinking in Washington.

PART III

REACTIONS TO NIE CONTENT, FORM AND LANGUAGE

49. As a supplement to the main thrust of the NIE Survey, a number of questions were asked on various aspects of NIE's. In addition, the Survey itself naturally evoked a number of informal responses going beyond the main scope of the Survey. The most significant of these reactions are summarized below.

50. Applicability of NIE's to Specific Working Problems. The question of the application of NIE's to specific tasks evoked perhaps the most complicated set of comments. Any generalization on this subject is made difficult by the fact that NIE's are read by a fairly large group of US officials who work on a wide variety of problems and who deal with these problems at many different levels of specificity. As an example, one NIE reader may be concerned with the formulation of a policy to guide US relations with friendly and neutral nations of the Far East for the next five years; another may be concerned with the planning and execution of the economic aid program for Indochina for the next 12 months. The wide range of subjects covered by NIE's

as a series also makes it difficult for end-users to appraise the applicability of the NIE's as a whole to their specific working problems.

51. Considering all NIE recipients as a group, the large majority indicated no serious difficulties in applying the general judgments of NIE's. However, there was a sharp split in this appraisal between the White House Staff, the President's Special Assistants, the NSC Planning Board and the Operations Coordinating Board, on the one hand, and those in the departments and agencies on the other. The majority of the former group indicated some degree of difficulty with selected NIE's. Many of their comments indicated a feeling that the broader the level of generalization in the NIE the less likely that it was founded on known facts. The difference in the attitudes of the White House respondents and those in departments and agencies may be due to some extent to the fact that the former, not being as immersed in a day-to-day flow of intelligence, feel more need for background detail or analysis. In contrast, those respondents in the departments and agencies are more fully briefed on foreign developments as part of their regular duties. White House respondents may tend to view the NIE as their basic document from the intelligence community on any

given problem addressed. The departmental officer, by contrast, is not so dependent upon detailed NIE back-up. In most instances, he can call upon his departmental intelligence unit to provide more detailed treatment, and quite often he does.

52. Degree of Duplication between NIE's and Other Intelligence.

A majority of the respondents found half or more of the NIE's received by them generally duplicative of other intelligence. The remainder felt that less than half (or none) duplicated other intelligence received. It was of course apparent during the interviews that few respondents had the same personal tastes or the same flow of intelligence papers across their desks, which would largely determine the extent to which they found NIE's duplicatory of other intelligence. The typical comment made was that NIE's served primarily as a convenient source of data and thinking pertaining to a given subject. The main value of an NIE was in its providing a convenient summary along the above lines as well as the collective judgments of the full-time intelligence people who follow such matters.

53. On the question of which parts of an NIE were most often found to be duplicative, only about half the respondents replied. These

indicated that judgments, analysis and argumentation, and the basic data were duplicated in varying degrees by other publications received. Comments by these respondents indicated that they did not expect newness or originality in an NIE, but that these, when there, were valuable. Duplication of NIE content was mentioned as occurring in (a) special request intelligence papers; (b) studies published by agencies contributing to NIE's; (c) cables and telegrams; and (d) newspapers and magazines.

54. General vs. Specific NIE's. The question of whether NIE's should cover broad general subjects or be more specific in their subject matter proved difficult to answer. This difficulty appeared to derive to some extent from the respondent's not having previously given any detailed thought to this problem and from his understandable reluctance to appear to limit the freedom of choice of those guiding national intelligence production. Only about half the respondents mentioned this subject and nearly all who did suggested some increase in the number of "specific" NIE's. By specific was meant (a) those concentrating on a particular aspect of, say, the Soviet problem, such as the Soviet guided missile program, in

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contrast to the general Soviet paper; (b) those concentrating upon selected aspects of an area, such as economic problems in the Near East, as contrasted to an NIE providing a general round-up of all the factors in that area; (c) those concentrating upon a single country as opposed to those dealing rather equally with all countries in an area; and (d) those concentrating upon selected aspects of a problem in a country, such as, Berlin rather than a broad gauge review of the German problem.

55. In general, the preference for these "specific" kinds of NIE's seemed to come from respondents with well-defined geographic or functional responsibilities. Also, many respondents emphasized that the desired increase in "specific" NIE's should not be accomplished by reducing the number of NIE's now dealing with other subjects. Several respondents acknowledged that the specific type of NIE suggested would be more closely tied to a given situation, and therefore would probably have a briefer lifespan than the more general type of NIE. The only two respondents requesting more "general" NIE's were concerned with world-wide policy planning and general economic coverage.

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56. Dissents. Attitude patterns on this question were consistent among the NIE recipients. Nearly all respondents, regardless of their area or specific duty were satisfied with the clarity of dissents in the majority of NIE's. More than one-third felt the difference was "always" clear; more than half felt the difference was "usually" clear. Only two felt about half the dissents were not clear. A large number of respondents favored the inclusion of the reasoning to support the dissent, though they recognized that controlling its length presented a difficult problem.

57. The evaluation of the usefulness of dissents was not quite so unanimous as the opinion on clarity. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents indicated that the dissents were of "some," "great" or "very great" value. Only six indicated the dissents to be of little value to them. The general thinking of the majority was that such a device increased the confidence of the reader; i. e., where dissents were used, the reader felt that he was receiving both sides of a controversial issue, and where dissents did not appear he could assume there were no serious differences of opinion among the IAC agencies.

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Even those readers who had no specific interest in the content of most of the dissents favored their use "in principle."

58. Length. The length and coverage of individual NIE's was another aspect on which there was general agreement. Although only a little more than three-fourths of the respondents expressed views, nearly all of these felt that the majority of NIE's were adequate in length and subject coverage. However, not a single respondent felt that all NIE's he read were adequate in length and coverage. Two felt that only half or less of the NIE's were unsatisfactory in these respects. Two others felt NIE's were generally "too long." At first glance, this appears to be a heavy vote of confidence and an expression of satisfaction with present length and coverage of individual NIE's. It should be pointed out, however, that there was no attempt to define what degree above one-half was represented by the term "the majority." It was merely defined for the respondents as more than one-half.

59. Estimative Language. The respondents were asked to express their opinion as to the clarity of the general estimative language, and particularly the "odds terms" (almost certainly, probably,

even chance, unlikely, etc.) used to convey a range of probability for various predictions. The majority of readers felt that both were understandable. The readers gave the "odds terms" a slightly higher clarity rating than the general language, even though many respondents were not fully aware of either the meaning of the individual "odds terms" used by the estimators to express the range of probability or the attempt to use these terms with consistency from one NIE to another. When asked to check his own interpretation of the odds terms with the estimator's use, the respondent usually agreed on the general order of probability, but boggled slightly at trying to pin these terms to a mathematical spread. However, the large majority both of those who were aware of the specific intent of the odds terms and of those not so aware agreed that the general meaning of the terms was clear to them. Three-fourths felt the terms were "understandable" and the remainder felt the terms were either "clear" or "extremely" clear. Only two respondents felt the odds terms caused difficulty. A few respondents commented that the odds terms should only be considered in the context of the general estimative language. Several suggested that the odds terms be printed inside the NIE cover.

60. Judging the general estimative language was an extremely difficult task for most respondents. The decisions by appellate courts were sometimes used for comparison. The large majority felt the language was understandable, but no one thought it was "extremely clear." About one-fifth thought the language was "clear" and about three-fourths thought it "understandable." A few considered the language to be difficult to understand. Some comments were received that estimative expression is a new task for the written language and that the accomplishment to date is rather remarkable considering the short time the estimators have been in business.

61. Timeliness. This aspect of NIE's was also rather difficult for respondents to assess. About one-third of the respondents expressed no views on this problem. If the respondent considered the difficulties involved in producing a timely national estimate, he almost always came up with the feeling that NIE's were "about as timely as could be expected." To avoid this, respondents were asked to consider NIE timeliness entirely in terms of its application to their problems. This, of course, did not work too well in regard to general NIE's and may have placed too much emphasis upon the "spot" or "crash" NIE's. No one felt that NIE's were "always" ahead of the problem

addressed. About half of the respondents felt NIE's "more often than not" were ahead of the problem. A few felt NIE's were "ahead of the problem" about half the time and a few also felt NIE's were "behind the problem" more often than not.

62. Organization and Format. The organization and format of NIE's received almost unanimous approval. A large majority felt the organization and format were "good"; a few felt they were "excellent." Only one respondent rated them as only "fair." Although no detailed questions were asked regarding aspects of NIE format, some respondents suggested that selected graphics would aid in absorbing masses of information, especially economic data. Others felt that it was somewhat easier to read copy with lines running across the page rather than in two columns. The Conclusions were considered especially valuable as a means of "getting at the meat" of the NIE. Those who did criticize the Conclusions were concerned more with the content than with the form. The most often-mentioned suggestion was that the Conclusions should be more of a summary of the entire text. Some suggestions were made that the connection between the

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Conclusions and the supporting text be made more apparent. Along this line, the numbering of the supporting paragraphs after each Conclusion was considered especially useful by those respondents who ordinarily read only selected portions of the text.

List of Agencies Which Provided Distribution

Data for the NIE Survey

The National Security Council
The Operations Coordinating Board
The Department of State
The Department of Defense
The Department of the Army
The Department of the Navy
The Department of the Air Force
The Atomic Energy Commission
The Federal Bureau of Investigation
The National Security Agency
The United States Information Agency
The Office of Defense Mobilization
The International Cooperation Administration
The Central Intelligence Agency

List of Respondents* for NIE Survey

Interviewed by CIA/NE

White House

Col. Andrew Goodpastor
Staff Secretary for the President

Gen. Theodore C. Parker
Office of Mr. Nelson Rockefeller
Special Assistant to the President for
Psychological Affairs

Lt. Col. Paul H. Cullen and Mr. Edward Galbreath
Office of Mr. Joseph Dodge, Special Assistant to
the President for Economic Affairs

Mr. Robert Matteson
Acting Director, Staff for Mr. Stassen,
Special Assistant to the President for
Disarmament Matters

NSC-NSC Planning Board

Mr. Dillon Anderson
Special Assistant to the President for
National Security Matters and Chairman
of the NSC Planning Board

Mr. James S. Lay and Mr. S. Everett Gleason
NSC Secretariat

* Note. Titles and ranks used are those in effect at the time
of the interview.

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TAB B to
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NSC Net Evaluations Subcommittee Staff

Brig. Gen. Gordon B. Rogers
Deputy Director

Dr. L. L. Montague, CIA
Col. Edward A. Herbes, USAF
Col. Worth L. Kindred, USA

OCB

Mr. Elmer Staats
Executive Secretary

Mr. J. E. MacDonald
OCB Staff Representative

Mr. Neilson Debevoise
Intelligence Staff

Dr. Horace Craig
Chief of Intelligence Staff

State

Mr. Robert Bowie
Director, Policy Planning Staff

Mr. Robert Barnes
Director, Executive Secretariat

Mr. Walter Radius, Staff Assistant to
the Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Economic Affairs

Mr. C. Burke Elbrick
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
European Affairs

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State (continued)

Mr. Cecil B. Lyon
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Bureau of Inter-American Affairs

Mr. Jacques Reinstein
Director, Office of German Affairs

Mr. Fraser Wilkins
Director, Office of Near Eastern Affairs

Mr. Kenneth T. Young
Director, Office of Philippine and
Southeast Asian Affairs

Mr. William Crawford
Deputy Director, Office of
Eastern European Affairs

Mr. Walter McConaughy
Chief, Office of Chinese Affairs

Mr. Walter Stoessel
Chief, USSR Staff

Army

Hon. Wilber M. Brucker
Secretary of the Army

Col. F. C. Weyand
Aide to Secretary of the Army
and

Col. Cuyler L. Clark
Assistant Aide to Secretary of the Army

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Army (continued)

Col. Donald B. Harriott
Office of Assistant Secretary of the Army
for Civilian-Military Affairs

Brig. Gen. W. C. Westmoreland
Secretary of General Staff

Col. William Price for Lt. Gen. James M. Gavin
Deputy Chief of Staff,
Plans and Research

Brig. Gen. David W. Gray
Deputy Chief, G-3, Plans

Air

Col. Andrew Kinney
Executive Assistant to the
Secretary of the Air Force

Mr. Trevor Gardner
Assistant Secretary for
Research and Development

Brig. Gen. Harvey T. Alness
Deputy Director, Plans

SAC, Offutt Field, Omaha

Panel 14-17 officers, headed by Col. Robert N. Smith,
Chief Intelligence Staff, representing the Commanding
General, Operations, Plans, and Intelligence

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AEC

Cdr. Charles E. Nelson
Special Assistant to Chairman AEC for
NSC Planning Board

Mr. John A. Hall
Director, Division of International Affairs

Mr. Edward R. Gardner
Deputy Director, Division of
International Affairs

Mr. Clark Vogel
Assistant Director for Plans,
International Affairs

Dr. Charles Reichardt
Chief, Intelligence Division

FBI

Mr. Meffert Kuhrtz
Liaison and IAC Participant
at Production Level

USIA

Mr. Frank L. Dennis
Deputy Assistant Director
for Program and Operations,
Representative to NSC Planning Board

Mr. George Heller
Deputy Assistant Director for FE Affairs

Mr. Lewis T. Olom
Chief, Intelligence Production Division

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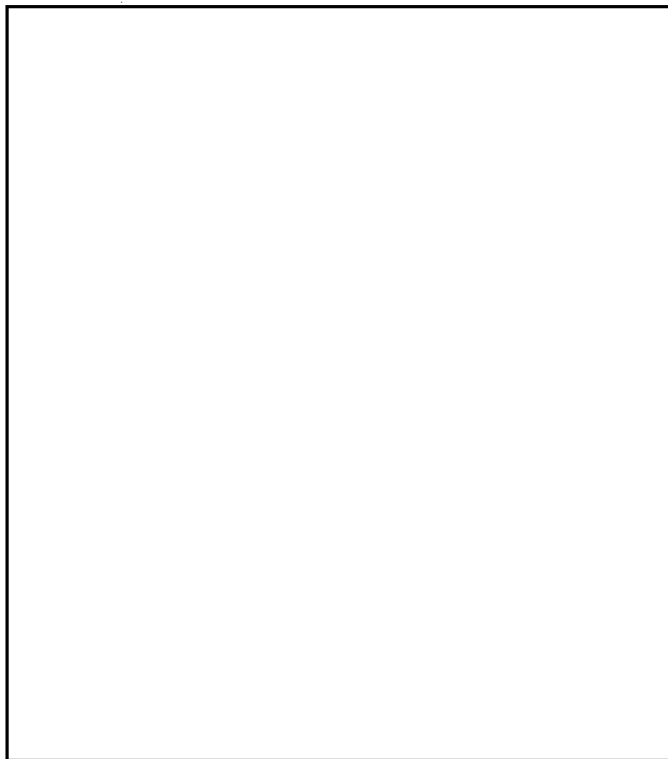
ICA

Mr. John Tobler
Assistant to the Director for
NSC, OCB and CFEP Liaison

Commerce

Mr. Milton A. Berger
Chief, China Hong Kong Section,
Far East Division

CIA-DD/P



Note. More than 75 NIE end-users participated in the interviews.

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TAB C to

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List of Respondents for NIE Survey

Contacted by

Departmental Intelligence Elements

Defense (JCS)

A general questionnaire was circulated by JIG to the following offices or officers, and the results were forwarded to the CIA/NE Task Force.

Office of Special Operations

Gen. G. B. Erskine, USMC, Ret.
Assistant to Secretary of Defense

Office of NSC Affairs

Gen. C. H. Bonesteel, III, USA
Defense Member NSC Planning Board

Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Office of the Special Assistant to JCS for NSC Affairs

Joint Strategic Survey Committee

Joint Strategic Plans Group

Joint Logistics Plans Group

Navy

Personal interviews were conducted by ONI. The results were forwarded to the CIA/NE Task Force. The following officers or offices were included.

Office of SECNAV

Office of CNO

Strategic Plans Division

Politico-Military Policy Division

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List of NIE Survey Respondents Outside Washington

Queried by Letter

The Department of State

US Embassy, Djakarta, Indonesia
John Gordon Main
Charge d'Affaires

US Embassy, Taipei, Taiwan
Karl Lott Rankin
American Ambassador

US Embassy, Saigon, Vietnam
G. Frederick Reinhardt
American Ambassador

US Embassy, Moscow, USSR
Walter N. Walmsley
Charge d'Affaires

US Embassy, Paris, France
C. Douglas Dillon
American Ambassador

US Embassy, Rome, Italy
John D. Jernegan
Charge d'Affaires

US Embassy, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
William C. Trimble
Charge d'Affaires

The Department of the Army

US European Command
Heidelberg, Germany

Far East Command
Zama, Honshu, Japan

Caribbean Command
Ford Amador, Canal Zone

The Department of the Navy

Commander-in-Chief
Atlantic

Commander-in-Chief
Pacific

Commander-in-Chief
US Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic
and Mediterranean

The Department of the Air Force

Commander
Air Defense Command
Colorado, USA

Commander
Alaska Air Command
Alaska

Commander
Northeast Air Command
APO, New York, New York